

# ***Terrorism and Security: The Challenge for Public Diplomacy***



A Report  
of the  
United States  
Advisory Commission  
on Public Diplomacy

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U.S. ADVISORY COMMISSION  
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PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

DECEMBER, 1985

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TO THE CONGRESS AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

In accordance with Section 8, Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1977, and Public Law 96-60, the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy submits herewith a report on diplomatic security and the public diplomacy mission of the U.S. Information Agency.

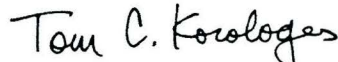
Respectfully submitted,



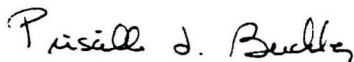
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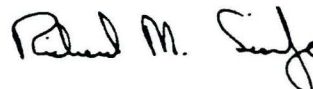
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In preparing this report, the members of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy were faced with a basic dilemma. How does the United States conduct public diplomacy abroad and, at the same time, protect the security of its personnel and facilities?

Increasing terrorism and acts of violence against American diplomats make it imperative that we do much more as a nation to protect U.S. civilian personnel and installations overseas. The problem is urgent, and the Commission welcomes the protective measures, enhanced professional standards, and plans to relocate and correct the security deficiencies of U.S. embassies that have been recommended by the Inman Panel on overseas security.

Effective public diplomacy, however, requires that the U.S. Information Agency's libraries, cultural centers, and press offices be accessible to those they are intended to serve. To "harden" USIA's libraries and centers, to insist on 100-foot setbacks for Agency facilities located in urban areas, or require that they be moved to remote embassy compounds would significantly diminish their effectiveness.

The goals of adequate security and effective public diplomacy are difficult to reconcile. We found no easy answers, and this report contains no panaceas.

We have made recommendations on draft legislation that implements the Inman Panel's report as it affects USIA. We have suggested approaches and principles that we believe ought to govern decision-making on USIA's security needs. And we have presented the views of public diplomacy professionals, many of whom have given a great deal of thought to these vexing problems.

The Commission has examined this issue with care. We met and discussed our concerns with Secretary of State George Shultz; USIA Director Charles Z. Wick; Congressman Dan Mica, Chairman, International Operations Subcommittee, House Foreign Affairs Committee, and the Subcommittee's Ranking Minority Member, Olympia Snowe; Admiral Bobby R. Inman; and a number of USIA's senior officers in Washington and overseas.

The views of USIA's officers have been indispensable in shaping our findings, and the Commission would like particularly to express its appreciation to Hans N. Tuch, a recently retired Career Minister in the Senior Foreign Service, who served as a consultant on this report and who provided valuable assistance during its preparation.

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While we have dealt primarily with public diplomacy, the Commission strongly believes that bilateral and multilateral political responses to terrorism are fundamental in dealing with the problem. Traditional industrial and military security techniques alone are not enough. Politically inspired violence against diplomats must not be the sole responsibility of the security and management offices of the foreign affairs agencies. The U.S. and other nations must deal more effectively with terrorists and states that support terrorism through international cooperation and action.

The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy is an independent, bipartisan oversight body created by Congress nearly forty years ago to assess the overseas information and educational exchange programs of the United States. Its members are private citizens appointed by the President, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, who represent the public interest and serve without compensation.

Our views are normally presented in annual reports to the Congress and to the President. The Commission's enabling legislation, however, provides that it also submit "such other reports to the Congress as it deems appropriate." We have submitted such special reports sparingly. The challenge of terrorism for public diplomacy warrants our doing so now.

Throughout this report we have sought to present an issue that has received much less attention than it deserves. As the Administration and the Congress seek to develop a national response to the problems of terrorism and security, it is important that the special needs of public diplomacy be fully understood. To that end we submit this report.



Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.  
Chairman



## Introduction

The United States is engaged in a war against international terrorism. It is a different kind of war than any we have fought before. The U.S. Information Agency is coming to grips with the problem of carrying out its mandated public diplomacy responsibilities and, at the same time, protecting the security of its personnel and installations abroad in the midst of this war.

Much thought has been given during the past few years about how to cope with this problem. International terrorism and how we fight it have achieved nation-wide attention, largely because of the Beirut and Kuwait car bombings, large-scale kidnappings, hijackings and murders which have directly affected a relatively large number of American citizens. As a result of these events and increased media coverage of them, the war against terrorism and the protection of American lives have become political priorities within the national consciousness.

To address these concerns, the Secretary of State established the Advisory Panel on Overseas Security chaired by Admiral Bobby R. Inman, USN (Ret.). The Inman Panel issued its report in June 1985 with an analysis and recommendations as to how the U.S. Government could better fight international terrorism and protect the security of its overseas personnel, its classified information, and its facilities.

The Panel's substantive and organizational recommendations, for the most part, are excellent. They focus public attention on practical approaches to confronting this new scourge in international life. Some of the recommendations are incorporated in draft legislation.

For USIA, however, the Inman Panel's report has one basic flaw. According to Admiral Inman's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 16, 1985, the Panel did not complete the job of taking into account USIA's mission and mandated responsibilities -- which differ in some important respects from those of the Department of State and other foreign affairs agencies. Admiral Inman recommended to the Committee that it give this "shortfall" its long-range attention.

This report addresses two issues: one, the draft legislation based on the Inman Panel's recommendations, as that legislation impinges on USIA's mission and responsibilities; and two, thoughts as to how USIA might cope with the dilemma of conducting public diplomacy abroad and at the same time give reasonable protection to its personnel and installations.

### The Draft Legislation and its Implementation

At the writing of this report, draft legislation, known as the "Diplomatic Security Act," seeks to implement many of the Inman Panel's recommendations. It places on the Secretary of State overall responsibility for the management of security policies and programs for U.S. civilian personnel and installations overseas. It gives the Secretary the authority, resources, and personnel to carry out this responsibility.

A basic question that concerned the Advisory Commission and USIA Director Wick was the Inman Panel's recommendation that the security services of the various foreign affairs agencies be merged into one Diplomatic Security Service within the Department of State. Would the special needs of public diplomacy be adequately taken into account in such a merger? As Director Wick wrote in a letter of September 30, 1985 to the Secretary of State, "... the [draft] legislation diminishes USIA's ability to protect its own separate facilities and the people who work in them, without offering any assurance that State would be as responsive and effective in dealing on an operational level with our needs as we are at this time."

Even though the proposed legislation does not specifically eliminate USIA's Office of Security (which in any case will continue to have domestic responsibilities) through a merger with the Department's new Diplomatic Security Service, and even though it provides that the Secretary shall act "... in consultation with other agencies having personnel or missions abroad" in developing security policies and programs, the Commission believes the legislation will be strengthened if it takes fully into consideration USIA's special mandate: Public diplomacy means the need to deal with the overseas public, the need for the public to have relatively free access to USIS libraries and cultural centers, and the desirability to give visible evidence of the open and free society that USIA represents.

To meet these needs, the Commission considered a number of options, including recommending legislation that would make the Director of USIA responsible for the security of USIA's personnel and installations overseas. We would have no problem with such an approach, but we understand the Inman Panel's reasoning in seeking to centralize responsibility, authority, and accountability for diplomatic security.

The Commission believes, however, that new security legislation should require at a minimum that the Department of State consult with USIA on security policies and programs, on funding levels, and on security standards. The legislation



should also provide USIA with the authority and separately identified funds to furnish logistical security support to its separate overseas posts and to perform its own security inspections. The Department should have no problem with such an approach in view of the Secretary of State's October 16, 1985 letter to Director Wick which states in part, "I agree that differing standards should be applied to [VOA] relay stations and libraries." The Secretary also asked the Department to work "closely" with USIA "on the development of appropriate security standards, procedures, and funding levels for USIA facilities overseas."

While the draft legislation gives the Secretary of State the responsibility for overseas security policies and programs, it does not make sufficiently clear that the Director of USIA, in executing his mandate for conducting public diplomacy abroad, must play a role in the development and application of security policies and standards to USIA's personnel and programs abroad. Without language in the legislation spelling out this shared responsibility, and without the authorization of resources specifically earmarked to help USIA carry them out, the Department of State would have sole operational authority over USIA's personnel and programs. The Commission strongly believes the Department cannot discharge this authority alone since it lacks the expertise and the mandate for doing so.

Complicating this issue is a bureaucratic dilemma: The tendency of a large and authoritative organization with political and budgetary clout, such as the Department of State, to ignore or to second-guess a smaller and less potent partner, such as USIA, when it comes to engaging in joint ventures.

Experience has demonstrated this principle time and again. In this particular context, the Commission cites two recent examples.

First, in preparing recent supplemental security budgets, the Department of State, according to USIA officials, unilaterally cut USIA's request without consulting or explaining its action to the Agency at the time, and it refused to earmark USIA's remaining portion as specifically applying to the Agency. Further, the Department did not let USIA participate in presenting the supplemental budget request to OMB. This action undermines the Secretary's call for "consultation with and input from USIA of those elements of the program which affect your interests and operations."

A second example is the controversy that developed between State and USIA over long delays in supplying USIA's field posts with emergency radio equipment. This equipment was determined by USIA's Office of Security to be essential to the security of

USIS personnel, but it was assigned a relatively low priority by the Department's Office of Communications. To make matters worse, the Department of State would not permit USIA to purchase its own equipment.

In the Commission's view, the USIA Director's need to share in the responsibility for the security of the Agency's personnel, programs and facilities overseas suggests at least three things. First, under the legislation there needs to be an inter-agency agreement between State and USIA clearly setting forth the dimensions of this joint venture. It should delineate the responsibilities of each agency and its personnel and spell out the services provided one to the other. There is such an agreement currently in existence. It has, according to USIA officers, worked well. It could serve as a model for a new agreement, or it could be continued in force. Above all, the agreement should specify the USIA Director's unilateral authority to remove personnel from a post if it is deemed necessary on security grounds. Without such an agreement, the Commission fears, bureaucratic dissension would impede efficient management of overseas security.

Secondly, there should be a basis in law for the interagency security policy-making and coordinating body, the Overseas Security Policy Group. This body would be chaired by the Department of State as the lead foreign affairs agency, and its executive would be the Department's Diplomatic Security Service. The Department should be bound by consensus or majority decisions of this body, and should not dominate or ignore the interests of the other agencies. Experiences cited earlier in this report, and the expectation that bureaucratic domination by the Department would increase, underscore the need for such an inter-agency body.

Thirdly, the new legislation should include authorization for funds dedicated to providing security services for USIA's installations which are separate from those served by the Department. Lacking such clearly identified funds, USIA would continue to be in the position of a supplicant vis-a-vis the Department. It would be handicapped in its effort to maintain the quality and quantity of security services for USIA's personnel and installations, such as U.S. cultural and information centers, binational centers, and VOA relay stations.

In summary, while there is no question that the Secretary of State should and does have the primary responsibility for the formulation of security policies and standards for overseas posts and personnel, he must take into account the separate mandate of USIA to conduct public diplomacy abroad and the responsibilities of the USIA Director in carrying out this



mandate. Unless this is reflected in the legislation, USIA responsibilities will be diluted or ignored. Implementation of the legislation should be by inter-agency agreement.

The Commission believes that by adopting these measures, the Secretary's ability to carry out his responsibilities for overseas security and for the protection of U.S. personnel and installations abroad would actually be strengthened.

#### Coping with Terrorism

The second major issue addressed in this report is the question of how USIA can best execute its public diplomacy mission in the face of continuing terrorism and the need for prudent security measures to protect its employees abroad.

The Inman Panel recommends relocating and "hardening" our overseas missions so as to give them maximum protection against car-bombing attacks. This recommendation is a logical and pragmatic result of threat analyses and recent tragic events involving some U.S. embassies and consulates. But the "relocation-and-hardening" principle runs directly against the "accessibility-and-openness" principle of public diplomacy. While USIA's public diplomacy professionals work closely with the Department of State's traditional diplomats in the execution and promotion of U.S. foreign policy, USIA was established as a separate agency because its responsibilities and operations are different from those of the Department. One of the principal differences between the two foreign affairs agencies is that, unlike State, USIA (through its overseas arm, USIS) deals with the public in foreign countries. It must therefore have access to that public, and foreign publics must have access to USIS personnel and activities.

The Secretary of State recognized this difference when he told USIA's Director that differing standards should be applied to VOA relay stations and to libraries in protecting them against the threat of terrorist attacks. We do not agree that relay stations necessarily require different standards inasmuch as they do not need public accessibility, but we agree completely with the Secretary on USIA's libraries and information centers.

The Secretary also called upon the Department to work closely with USIA in developing appropriate security standards, procedures, and funding levels for Agency facilities overseas. The question of developing appropriate standards, however, is a difficult one, especially in view of the possibility that if U.S. embassies are "hardened" and become more difficult to



assault, the vulnerability of less isolated and less protected highly visible U.S. installations, such as a USIS library or a binational center, may increase.

The Commission suggests that the determination of standards and criteria for the location and protection of USIS facilities be guided by two principles: flexible standards and the expertise of the Country Team.

#### The Principle of Flexibility

Flexibility in establishing physical criteria for USIS centers is essential, in the Commission's view, if we are to succeed in linking USIA's responsibility to conduct public diplomacy with the need to protect personnel, information and facilities. Flexibility is necessary because the type, quality and extent of the threat differs from country to country (and from city to city in some countries). Timing also plays a role. What in 1984 was a tranquil environment may be a dangerous situation in 1985. The attitude of the host government in its willingness and ability to provide protection is another factor. Moreover, the climate for terrorism to flourish in a given location differs widely as does the potential effectiveness of various countermeasures.

The need for flexibility was expressed pointedly by USIA's Branch Public Affairs Officer in Bombay in reply to a State Department message exhorting the Consulate "to consider a site approximately ten acres, located several miles out in the suburbs, away from the congested downtown area." He writes that the message "... implies that the Washington planners see Bombay as being surrounded by Chevy-Chase and Arlington look-alikes. The reality is that Bombay's suburbs are mainly heavy industry and shanty towns, like Mexico City or Sao Paulo."

The Branch PAO goes on to state:

"Set-backs and campus settings may give some protection from speeding car-bombers, but not from the other available means, like rocket-propelled grenades (as have been tried on the set-back Embassy in New Delhi) or mortars (fired at the Embassy in Lisbon, which is in a park setting) or even mobs (which so easily seized and burned the Embassy in Islamabad, in its splendid isolation).

"There are three aspects of terrorism that concern us: one, the assassination of individual diplomats (the British Deputy High Commissioner in Bombay, a Soviet attache in New Delhi), mob action and demonstrations (of which we have had our share -- and survived so far), and bombing attacks.

"For the first, there is not much we can do but be alert. For the second, our safety lies in the hands of local authorities and in whatever crowd/entrance barriers we can create.

"For the third, I argue that USIS is safer, i.e. less likely to be targeted, when located, as we are, in a downtown, congested people-filled area. My underlying assumption is that terrorists do not want the resultant public reaction, and host government hostility, that bombing a diplomatic installation in downtown Bombay would cause. While maybe cynical, it may be that having crowds of people in and around USIS, as well as Indian police or troops out front, is a better deterrent than sitting, like the proverbial duck, in isolation."

A corollary to the flexibility issue is the question of co-location of USIS installations with other elements of the U.S. Mission.

The Commission believes a step in the right direction is a State Department decision memorandum dated September 27, 1985, "Policy on Locating Agencies in Embassies," addressed to Undersecretary Ronald Spiers by Assistant Secretaries Robert Lamb and Donald Bouchard. The memorandum, however, was promulgated without USIA's clearance -- still another example of the Department's tendency to ignore the Agency in joint ventures.

This memorandum, which confines itself to the construction of new facilities, states that "... all U.S. Government activities under the authority of the Chief of Mission located in the capital should be housed in the chancery except where there are persuasive operational, program or security reasons to locate them elsewhere." Among the exceptions to this policy are "offices which generate large amounts of public traffic and which for program reasons want to put some distance between these programs and the embassy" (USIA libraries and binational centers); and "offices which are impractical to move" (VOA relay stations). VOA's correspondent bureaus should also be included among the exceptions.

The exceptions that are specified in the memorandum should satisfy USIA's concerns with regard to co-location. At the same time, the Commission believes co-location of the PAO's office, particularly in large embassies, encourages consolidation of mission activities and improves inter-agency coordination. It also enhances the PAO's ability to serve the Ambassador and the mission in the important role of public affairs advisor.



One other point of possible misunderstanding should be clarified. Both USIA and the State Department profess not to discriminate between U.S. and foreign national employees in providing physical security. A misunderstanding regarding the principle of equal protection may have arisen as a result of the Department's concern for protecting privileged or classified information, for which reason it does restrict files and equipment from access by foreign nationals. Certain separate security measures for U.S. employees and their offices vis-a-vis foreign nationals therefore are not a matter of physical security against terrorist attack but a means to protect classified information and equipment. This point is worth emphasizing inasmuch as there is unanimity among USIA's field officers that there must not be any discrimination between American and foreign national employees in providing physical security at their place of work.

Flexibility is fundamental to USIA's ability to function effectively. The Secretary of State's acknowledgment of the need for different standards for USIA's centers and libraries and his call for the Department to work with USIA on this issue does not seem to have trickled down to the working level in the Office of Security and the Foreign Buildings Office of the Department of State. The Bombay example cited previously is not the only one that vexes USIA. A proposed USIS Center in Dhaka, as of this writing, is still being treated by the Department in accordance with the rigid standards established for embassies -- i.e. a 100 foot set-back or nothing. Flexibility must not only be accepted as a principle, it must be put into practice by those charged with responsibility.

#### The Principle of Country Team Expertise

The Commission believes the best repository of expertise on terrorism and security in a given country is the Country Team under the leadership of the Chief of Mission. The latter ultimately carries the responsibility for the security of an embassy and its personnel as delegated by the Secretary of State. The Ambassador and the Country Team are in the best position to determine the quality of the security threat, the ability of the host government to cope with it, and appropriate counter-measures.

The Country Team, which includes the Ambassador's principal advisors and senior heads of embassy elements, has the experience, knowledge, specialized responsibilities, intelligence information, and political judgments necessary to make intelligent, practical and timely decisions. Washington is too distant and encumbered by too many bureaucratic and

political pressures to have primary responsibility for these decisions. The Ambassador, the Regional Security Officer and the PAO need to utilize, of course, the technical and policy advice that only the Washington security community can provide. We recommend that important, long-range decisions made by an Ambassador be confirmed and approved by whatever inter-agency security coordinating mechanism is set up in Washington. This is necessary to provide continuity in the decision-making process so that a succeeding Chief of Mission or PAO cannot reverse or substantially modify a predecessor's decisions without substantive reasons. It also permits the U.S. Government to establish priorities in providing funding and other resources.

#### USIA's Approach to Security

The Commission submitted a number of questions to USIA on overseas security and its impact on the Agency's personnel, installations and programs. The replies we received are a compendium of views submitted by USIA's five geographic area directors. By extension, these views represent the considered thought of many of USIA's experienced professionals overseas.

The Commission believes it is the conviction of the majority of USIA's Foreign Service Officers that "terrorism cannot be allowed to deter us from doing our job." When a library is closed for security reasons, the terrorists have won. In practical terms this means that USIA should avoid closing up or being driven out of a country for fear of terrorism. Another extreme, which would have a similar effect, would be to protect USIA's centers and libraries against the danger of terrorism to such an extent that they become isolated from their audiences, thereby advertising a siege mentality that contrasts with the open society USIA represents.

*These are unacceptable extremes. In between, most professional public diplomats want to find ways to conduct their business in reasonable safety. They recognize there are certain risks, risks which have been present for many years. Reasonable precautions and protection are what most employees seek. This is where flexibility in establishing security standards and Country Team expertise enter the scene. For instance, there will be situations, such as in Cali and Medellin, Colombia, where the threat is so great and the ability to protect USIA's officers so nearly impossible, that the Agency must pull out. And there will be situations where the cost of protecting ourselves against terrorism is so high that other ways of conducting public diplomacy must be explored, ways that might be possible in one country but impractical or impossible in another.*



What most USIA Foreign Service Officers find difficult to accept is that relatively inexpensive and prudent precautions are delayed for inordinate lengths of time or are rejected, while costly and difficult standards are established that may protect against 4,000 pound car bombs but do little to deter a common thief. Two examples will suffice.

First, almost all PAOs located in Western Europe have for some time been alert to the possibility of kidnapping and assassination and have been instructed on how to minimize the danger. Most PAOs felt they were exposed to danger by being forced to ride in big black American-manufactured vehicles with diplomatic license plates. Some suggested repeatedly they be permitted to drive less conspicuous, commonly used European models with, preferably, local non-diplomatic license plates. Armor-plated vehicles were a much lower priority. PAOs were told that Congress was adamant regarding enforcement of the Buy America Act and that the Department and USIA could do nothing about it. That was 1980. The following year PAOs were informed the Agency agreed with them, but they would have to wait until the Department changed its procurement procedures. In 1984 the posts were informed that in principle their recommendation to convert to European-made cars was approved, but they could go ahead only when funds became available. Finally, a full five frustrating years later, Washington was permitting personnel to procure locally made vehicles, and fully armored cars were being provided to some PAOs.

The second example, mentioned earlier, is the frustration that USIA's Office of Security experienced in persuading the Department's Office of Communication to distribute emergency radio equipment to some USIS officers.

Lack of satisfaction on some of these relatively inexpensive, pragmatic recommendations, and priority treatment for representatives of other agencies in the assignment of protective measures, contributes to a sense of cynicism on the part of some PAOs, especially when they reflect on the huge expenditures planned for relocating and building new embassies.

If embassies are relocated and hardened and USIA's centers remain in their central urban locations, they might indeed become more vulnerable. Even now USIS installations in several countries have been more frequent targets of violence than embassies and consulates, although such violence has not been on the level of car bombings. The requirement that USIS libraries and centers be accessible to the public does not mean that security at these facilities cannot be strengthened. The Agency's comment on this to the Commission is a reasonable one:

"The possibility that our facilities may be targetted more often as our embassies become less vulnerable makes it all the more important that we take every security measure we can, wherever we can, without jeopardizing our ability to carry out our mission."

The Agency must also consider new ways of conducting its business in situations where it may be too dangerous to maintain its open centers and libraries but where moving them to "hardened," distantly located embassy compounds would not be cost-effective. American speakers can be scheduled on local premises under local sponsorship as is often done now. In extreme cases, modern technology (computer services, word processors, micro-processing, telecommunications) could substitute for public access to centers, and USIS services could be provided from the chancery directly to the most important audiences. None of these are optimum alternatives, but they may be preferable to closing down entirely or to expending tremendous resources for providing a "safe" environment.

The main point is that the PAO, the Country Team and Agency professionals must work together to plan for the long term as well as for the short term, conscious of the fact that there will always be some risks but aware of the various options which ought to be considered.

In response to the Commission's question about public reaction to the security measures being taken at USIS installations, there appears to be a consensus among USIS personnel abroad that reasonable precautions are accepted by most patrons. In most cases, these safeguards are appreciated, especially in those locations where violence has taken place or has been threatened.

A measured approach, however, is required. USIS must avoid offending important and well-known patrons by body searches. USIS must avoid creating apprehension by giving the impression that it knows or dangers of which the general public is unaware. USIS must avoid repelling patrons by instituting measures which are out of proportion to the perceived threat and are more severe than those in place at local institutions exposed to a similar threat. Few people object to metal detectors and package checking these days, especially when such inconveniences are explained in understandable terms, and when the threat perception is shared by the public.



One caveat must be kept in mind. In Iron Curtain posts and in other totalitarian countries -- where acts of terrorism are less frequent and where patrons may already take a political risk in coming to a USIS library or attending a USIS function -- USIS should not increase that risk or repel attendance by instituting procedures granting local authorities easy access to visitors' identities. Again, this is a question of weighing the threat against the obligation of USIS to carry out its mission under difficult conditions.

USIA has proposed major increases in its security budget. The Commission is concerned, however, that this budget and its justifications are not being given adequate consideration by the Department of State. It is for this reason the Commission has proposed that USIA's security budget be specifically earmarked in the proposed legislation.

In response to the Commission's question about the morale of American and foreign national employees in the face of the increased terrorist threat, we summarize here the replies of Agency officers in various foreign posts:

- There is always a risk which most employees accept;
- It is impossible to conduct public diplomacy from behind barred doors;
- Reasonable security precautions are accepted and appreciated as long as they are not considered excessive in terms of the perceived threat;
- Protective security measures at our working places must be administered for U.S. and foreign national employees so as to give them equal protection;
- USIS employees should be given equal consideration in threat assessment and protection vis-a-vis other USG employees at the post or U.S. official visitors from Washington;
- The practical recommendations of USIS employees in the field and the reasonable security measures suggested for USIS posts by USIA's Office of Security should not be ignored or relegated to lower priority by the Department of State; and
- Better and increased training, primarily of foreign national employees, including sensitivity training for those engaged in guarding USIS installations, would enhance their feeling of belonging, involvement and commitment and contribute to the good morale of USIS staffs.



Finally, long-term planning requires that USIS continue to identify its own particular security needs in terms of general threat assessments, while at the same time describing clearly and forcefully the nature of USIA's public affairs responsibilities to other parts of the foreign affairs community and to the Congress. As one PAO suggests, if necessary "we must prepare to conduct our business in ways which differ radically from our current style of operations." In general, however, the Commission takes the position that USIA must maintain libraries, cultural, information and binational centers wherever they are effective and wherever security permits. USIA, the Department of State, Congress and the American people should not accept less.

Edwin J. Feulner Jr.

# Don't Let Security Hide Our Light

*Safer embassies, yes—but the USIA must stay out among the people.*

The Beirut embassy bombings have had a traumatic but perhaps ultimately beneficial impact on how U.S. diplomatic personnel and facilities overseas will be protected in the future.

Strict new State Department security standards are being applied to all U.S. agencies overseas. Central to this undertaking is the wholesale relocation of U.S. embassies and other facilities.

There is a danger, however, in such an undertaking. It involves the United States Information Agency, the agency charged with carrying out U.S. information, cultural, and educational exchange programs overseas.

In the case of the USIA, the issue of "security" is not as clear-cut as it is for the Department of State. USIA, unlike State, is an agency whose efforts are directed primarily at foreign people, as opposed to foreign governments. USIA's programs reach not only government officials, but influential journalists, scholars, students, artists, political figures, business and labor leaders and other opinion-makers. Its audience goes beyond the elites to thousands of individuals who read in USIA libraries, apply for Fulbright grants or attend USIA-sponsored lectures and performing arts presentations.

To be effective, USIA's officers and facilities must be accessible. Its centers, libraries, and press offices must be convenient to those they are intended to serve. They must be open to the public. In almost all cases this means locating them in major urban areas, usually center-city locations—the very locations, in fact, where the standards of physical security sought by State and others are most difficult to achieve.

U.S. embassies have a more passive role. They do not need to actively seek out foreign visa applicants,

U.S. citizens in distress and other petitioners.

Consider a hypothetical U.S. mission in a typical South Asian capital. Almost all media, cultural, political, business, and educational activities are centered deep in this urban area. Buildings there are generally old, crowded, poorly constructed, overpriced, with an occupancy rate of nearly 100 percent. The idea of a 100-foot "setback" from the street is unheard of, as is being able to buy, lease, or build a modern free-standing structure with the kind of security features the State Department wants.

The U.S. Embassy in this country is being moved seven miles out of the city center to a new, secure diplomatic enclave the host government is developing. Hundred-foot setbacks are easily obtained, as are new, custom-designed structures with state-of-the-art security features. The embassy pressures USIA to join it in the move.

There is only one thing wrong with this. USIA's public affairs officer knows that by retreating to the suburban enclave, the agency will become inaccessible to most of the people it is trying to reach. The new, highly secure Information Section will have few local journalists visiting, because the capital's working journalists are downtown, close to their newsrooms in the center city, too pressed for time and too financially strapped to make the long trip out of town. The beautiful, new, secure USIA library will no longer have the readership of the thousands of eager students who cannot afford public transportation to the suburbs. The new, secure USIA cultural center will draw tiny audiences of diplomats, government officials and wealthy suburban dwellers, while the hundreds who once came to see USIA-sponsored films or to hear lectures will be miles away.

Based on my discussions with USIA officers around the

world, I can say that this hypothetical situation is quite typical of what would happen at many overseas posts.

Washington's heightened attention to the funding and organizational requirements of ensuring the safety of diplomats is welcome and overdue. It is important, though, that equally wise policies appropriate to public diplomacy—the mission of USIA—also be adopted.

This can best be achieved by selective and flexible application, on a case-by-case basis, of State Department security standards. In many instances this will mean waivers for USIA's libraries and centers in countries where U.S. embassies are being relocated.

It also means taking every prudent precaution: informed threat assessments country by country; effective, architecturally appealing building controls; adequate security training; danger pay and other additional compensation for USIA's officers, commensurate with the risks taken. In fact, this is very similar to the policy USIA has followed for years, a policy that has worked well.

Terrorism is not new to USIA. It is something the agency has learned to deal with, even when it has meant closing centers (four in Latin America in the late 1960s and early 1970s) or curtailing their operations (Beirut in this decade). Wholesale retreat to safe, but inaccessible, enclaves is not the answer.

Personal contact with global opinion leaders is essential to the conduct of American foreign policy. USIA's outreach should not be limited to such safe but impersonal programs as the Voice of America and Worldnet television broadcasts.

*The writer is chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.*



THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

October 16, 1985

Dear Charlie:

Thank you for your letter of September 30, 1985 concerning the draft legislation to implement the Inman Panel's recommendations on security.

I understand your concerns and agree that it is important that we discuss how the proposed legislation would be applied to USIA. The draft Bill fixes overall responsibility and authority for the management and direction of the US civilian security program overseas on the Secretary of State.

The Inman Panel made it clear during the course of its work that the security program was overly fragmented and without a sufficiently clear chain of command to permit good management and maximum protection for our personnel overseas.

Neither the Congress nor the American public understands or can be expected to condone confusion in security responsibility, authority or hierarchy. The Inman Panel recommendation is an attempt to save us all from any semblance of confusion or misunderstanding on this important question. The basic goal envisioned by the Panel in this recommendation was to ensure that all American officials and their dependents serving overseas would benefit equally from an effective and responsive security program designed to protect them against the numerous terrorist and other security-related threats that unfortunately exist in the overseas environment. I share that concern.

With that objective in mind, I want State to work closely with your people on the development of appropriate security standards, procedures, and funding levels for USIA facilities overseas.

The Honorable  
Charles Z. Wick, Director,  
United States Information Agency.

I agree that differing standards should be applied to relay stations and to libraries. I do, however, believe that the responsibility and management of overseas security services should rest with State while encouraging consultation with and inputs from USIA of those elements of the program which affect your interests and operations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G. Shultz', written in a cursive style.

George P. Shultz